

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed August 14, 2002, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider the following remarks. Claims 1-20 and 24-26 remain pending in the application. The Applicant respectfully requests further examination and reconsideration of the application in light of the remarks.

Rejection of Claims 1-20 and 24-26 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-20 and 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Irvine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,033,155). The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. U.S. Patent No. 6,033,155 has a filing date of March 9, 1998. Consequently, it does not qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). In particular, the present application claims the priority benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/066,588, which was filed on November 26, 1997. U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/066,588 provides the subject matter basis for each of the claims of the present application. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that Irvine et al. cannot support the rejection of claims 1-20 and 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

CONCLUSION

The Applicant has distinguished claims 1-20 and 24-26 over the cited references. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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